A Letter from the Vindicator of the Bishop of Condom, to the Author of a late Discourse concerning the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

SIR,

PRefaces are now much in vogue; but your Discourse, it seems, had come out without any, had not my Vindication obliged you to direct one to Me, whom you think to be concern'd to peruse your Papers. Really, *Sir*, I think it would have been much more prudence in you not to have called upon me at this time, or at least to have shewn a more modest and sincere Behavior than you have done. For if the exceptions you make against me in your Preface prove vain, the *Tales* you lay to my charge, be meer cavils, or your own; and, instead of justifying the Defender, you involve your self in the same guilt; you give me and all honest well-meaning persons just reason to suspect the whole Book that follows.

You say you did not fall asleep when you came to my Article of *Extreme Unction*; and really, *Sir*, I believe you: but whether you were kept awake by a more than usual curiosity, or by a desire to inform your judgment, or by some such kind of passions as are usually raised in Chymists, when after a long and tedious diligence and labor, they find all their expectations lost in a smoky Evaporation, is not easie for me to determine. But this is certain, if there be nothing said in all your eighteen Sheets, but what in five pages of my Reply has either been prevented, or such grounds laid, as with a small Reflection will afford a sufficient Answer; you had more than the two first Reasons to keep you from sleeping whil'st you perused them.

But you are resolv'd not to take my word, because you say (*Præf. pag.* 4.) I have *defend the Authority of it by telling two* Tales: (You had reason to beg an excuse for the Expression, tho' the way you did it makes it a double fault) But what if these *Tales* prove of your own coining, and you in them both have grosly imposed upon me and your Readers? my credit will, I hope, be still good: and the Tables being turned, your word, I fear, will have little Authority with men who hate to be impos'd upon.

The *first Tale*, you say, *and that a notable one*, is, that I make the *Defender himself confess that this* Extreme Unction *is as ancient and universal a Practice as I would have it thought to be*: Whereas *you find indeed the Defender confessing, that the Interpretation of the words of St* James, *which he followed, was for* 800 *years the undoubted meaning of them, and that the ancient Liturgies of the Church, and the public Practice of it for above* 800 *years, shew that they esteemed this Unction*, (i. e. St. *James's* Unction) *to belong primarily to Bodily Cures, and but secondarily only to the sickness of the Soul.* But that I should therefore make him *confess Extreme Unction to have been of so ancient standing, is to make him say the quite contrary to what he does say.*

But pray, *good Sir*, where is it that I make the Defender confess this *Extreme Unction* to be so old? Certainly, if you did not sleep when you read my Reply, you dreamt waking, or your passion urg'd you to take an occasion to cavil with me, tho' none was given. You cannot think, *Sir*, but that if I had really thought the Defender had granted me such a Conclusion as this: *Extreme Unction, as now practised in the Church of* Rome, *was also universally practised in the* East *and* Western *Churches for the*

first 800 *years*, I ſhould have made more benefit of ſuch a Conceſſion. I am certain my Cauſe is not ſo weak, as to ſtand in need of challenging ſuch Conceſſions where they are not granted; neither will you, I hope, when you reflect upon what you ſay, think me ſo ſtupid as to pretend ſuch a Conceſſion, and after ſuch a pretence make no uſe of it.

My words in the beginning of that Article (*Reply pag.* 70.) are theſe,---- 'Yet, *becauſe he was to oppoſe the Catholic Church, he would have this* (Extreme Unction) *to be only a Ceremony made uſe of in the miraculous Cures of the Apoſtles: And to prove this, he affirmed that the ancient Rituals of the* Roman Church *for* 800 *years after Chriſt, ſhew the Practice to have had the primary reſpect to Bodily Cures.*---- Again, §. 53. I ſay, *How! did the Greek and Latin Churches for the firſt* 800 *years practiſe this Unction; and do Proteſtants, who pretend to reform according to the Primitive Purity, reject it?* But I preſently ſhew the Defender's ſenſe, and add; *Yes, but they* (the Primitive Chriſtians) *practiſed it with a primary reſpect to Bodily Cures, and we* (Roman Catholics) *to thoſe of the Soul.* Moreover, *pag.* 74. I again plainly expreſs my ſelf, that he thought *the Church underſtood that paſſage of St.* James *in His ſenſe* (that is, primarily for Bodily Cures) *for* 800 *years.*

Now from all theſe paſſages it plainly appears, that I only argued from his admitting of an Unction practiſed in the Church for the firſt 800 years; which Unction he indeed affirm'd had its primary reſpect to Bodily Cures; and which, I told him, unleſs he could prove that it had no relation to the Sickneſs of the Soul, as a Sacrament, but only to the Body, in order to miraculous Cures, he would prove nothing againſt us.

Indeed where I ſpeak of his falſifying Cardinal *Cajetan*'s Expreſſion, I have ſome words, which taken alone may bear the ſenſe he would draw them to; for I ſay, *What if Cardinal* Cajetan *had affirmed as he did, would it be ſufficient to reject a Practice coming down from the Apoſtles, and from Age to Age viſibly continued in all Chriſtian Churches, both of the* Eaſt *and* Weſt, *for* 800 *years, as he himſelf confeſſes, notwithſtanding the gifts of Miracles were ceaſed; and this upon the Teſtimony of one man's affirming that it cannot be proved from that Text of Scripture?* But any one but they who have a mind to cavil will eaſily ſee, by what went before, and my ſeveral expreſſions after, that when I affirmed, that *he himſelf confeſſed that an Unction was viſibly continued in all Chriſtian Churches, both of the* Eaſt *and* Weſt, *for* 800 *years*; I meant it with thoſe limitations which he had expreſſed, and which I intended afterwards to ſhew were nothing to the purpoſe.

But if this do not ſatisfie, rather than multiply diſputes, I will acknowledg, that as the Defender did not confeſs that the Extreme Unction, of which we now ſpeak, which has a primary reſpect to the Soul's Aid, and a ſecondary to that of the Body, was viſibly continued in all Chriſtian Churches, both of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt* for 800 years, but only acknowledged that there was an Unction continued with a primary reſpect to Bodily Cures; ſo if my expreſſion in that place have given any one an occaſion to think that the Defender did confeſs ſuch a Continuance without that limitation, I do retract it, and form my Argument thus.

I told him that Cardinal *Cajetan* did not poſitively ſay as he affirmed he did. But what if he had? (*Why truly then* (ſays this Diſcourſer) *the Defender did not falſifie him.* No truly, neither ſhould I have accuſed him of it.) Seeing the Defender acknowledges that there was an Unction of the ſick continued in the *Eaſt* and *Weſt* for 800 years; nay, I may add, ſeeing both He and this Diſcourſer (tho' they charge the Church with altering her Intentions, yet) cannot deny but there was an Unction practiſed in the *Eaſt* and *Weſtern* Churches from Age to Age, ever ſince the Apoſtles times, notwithſtanding the gifts of Miracles were ceaſed; and ſeeing it is manifeſt that thoſe Rituals of the firſt 800 years, which the Defender ſays had a primary reſpect to Bodily Cures, had alſo a reſpect to thoſe of the Soul, which is Primary in Dignity, as

ours

ours have now to both; and that it can be made out by the very nature of Tradition, that it was morally impossible for such successive Innovations to be made as the Defender and the Discourser have imagined: what madness would it be to reject a practice coming down by such an uninterrupted Tradition, and a universal consent of particular Churches, upon the Testimony of one man's affirming that it cannot be proved from that Text of Scripture?

But there is a second part of this Tale. *I pass by* (says this Discourser) *your insinuation, that he* (the Defender) *supposed the Unction mentioned by St.* James *was practised by the Primitive Church for the first 800 years. He said no such thing, nor supposed any such thing, but only that for 800 years they esteemed St.* James's *Unction to belong primarily to Bodily Cures; which they might do, and yet in less than 800 years they might bring in an Unction different from that of St.* James, *tho' both of them were primarily designed for Bodily Cures.*

Now really, *Sir*, if this was insinuated, it was not without just grounds; for seeing the Defender's endeavors were to maintain that this expression of St. *James*'s was to be interpreted of Bodily Cures, and back'd his Assertion with the ancient Liturgies of the Church, and the public Practice of it for above 800 years, which he affirmed were also for Bodily Cures; and seeing he did not so much as hint at any alteration during all that time: how could any one imagin but he supposed the Unction mentioned by St. *James* was practised till that time? especially seeing he could not but foresee the many woful contradictions which necessarily follow such a pretended change as *Chemnitius* invented, and you have espoused after him.

But now we come to the *second Tale, Brother to the former*, and therefore *a notable one* too. *I told him that Cardinal* Cajetan *did not positively say as the Defender affirm'd he did.* 'Tis true, and I say it still a third time, and shall make it evidently appear, to any one that will weigh the Propositions.

The Defender affirm'd that Card. *Cajetan freely confesses* that this passage of St. *James can belong to no other* than Bodily Cures. 'But, says this Discourser, the only pre-'tence you have that the Cardinal did not 'positively say what the Defender affirmed 'him to have said, is, that the Defender 'did not give the Cardinal's own words, 'but what he conceived to be his sense.

Here, *Sir*, you are embarqu'd in the same Vessel with the Defender, and espouse his dangers. You affirm with him, that the sense of that passage of Cardinal *Cajetan*'s, is a free confession that St. *James*'s *words could belong to no other than Bodily Cures.* Let us lay the Propositions together, and see whether they be equivalent, or no, or whether yours be a necessary Inference from the other; for if neither of these be, I hope you will grant it to look something like what I call'd it, *a Falsification.*

The Cardinal's Proposition according to your own Translation, is,	The Defender's Proposition, is,
'It neither appears 'by the words, nor by 'the Effect, that he '(St. *James*) speaks of 'the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, but 'rather of the Unction 'which our Lord appointed in the Gospel to be used upon sick 'persons by his Disciples. For, &c.	*Cardinal* Cajetan *freely confesses that these words of St.* James, Is any man sick, &c. *can belong to no other than Bodily Cures.*

Now, *Sir*, that these two Propositions,

Cardinal *Cajetan* acknowleges that Extreme Unction cannot be proved from that passage, but rather an Unction for Bodily Cures,

are

Cardinal Cajetan freely confesses that that passage can belong to no other but Bodily Cures,

are not equivalent, I appeal to any one who can but understand a difference betwixt these two Propositions, *What you say does not prove the Assertion*; and, *What you say proves the contrary.*

But it may be the one is a necessary Inference from the other; for, as the Defender says, *When two things only are in Controversie, for the Cardinal absolutely to exclude the one, and apply it to the other, is in effect to confess that it could only belong to him.*

Well,

Well, but what if the Cardinal do not absolutely exclude the one, but say, *this does not appear, but rather that*; will you therefore infer positively, *therefore it can only belong to that*? I assure you, *Sir*, if you have no better premisses to prove your other Conclusions by, than what you have for this, tho' they may perplex the less Learned, yet any one who knows what connexion there ought to be betwixt the Premisses and the Conclusion, will deny your Consequences.

But to make this clear; suppose *I* should tell you, you cannot positively prove from that passage, *Go ye baptizing all Nations*, &c. nor from any other in Scripture, without the general Practice and Authority of the Church, that Infants are to be baptized: I suppose you would not deny me the Proposition. But should I say, that passage, and all the other in Scripture concerning Baptism, can belong to no other but to Adults; I persuade my self you would not readily give me your assent. And if this be not a parallel case with the other, pray shew the difference. I might here return your own Complement, and tell you that I might have spared all this trouble, *because it is so clear, that there is no need of words to make an honest man understand it*; *and all the words in the world will signifie nothing, if a man be not so honest as he should be.*---But (Sir) *it must be such another man as* You *and the* Defender *seem to be, who reads the Cardinal's words, and can find him to be so positive as you say he was*: But I do not think it proper to use so much Gall, where the simplicity of the Dove ought to prevail; especially seeing you tell us, that *they who are honest and wise, will not so much consider who they are that break forth into the most vehement exclamations*, (I suppose you will give me leave to add, clamorous Censures, or bold Assertions) *as who they are that bring the clearest Proofs*.

Thus, *Sir*, of the *two Tales* you lay to my charge, the first is a meer Cavil, and the other is plainly your own. So that I have a just occasion given me from hence to admonish You and the Defender, that if either of you undertake to vindicate him from those *Calumnies, Falsifications, false Translations*, &c. which I have so justly charged him with, you do not make your selves more guilty by espousing their Defence; For tho' I think I might have excused the Defender from a wilful intention to falsifie Cardinal *Cajetan* in his *Exposition*, yet seeing both He and You have gone about to defend that which was so plainly a Falsification; it is manifest that 'tis You your selves have *done the prejudice either to your own Honesty or Understanding*. Pray take your choice, for *one* at least belongs to you.

You seem to boast of a Talent the Defender has of Answering Books so quickly. Much good may do him with it. I envy him not; but wish he would take more care to study what he says himself, and to peruse the Collections that others bring him in, that we may not hereafter be troubled with false Translations, or so many things to so little purpose. For my own part, I thank God I have other Employments, which I am sure are much preferable to this; so that it is only spare minutes, which are not many, that I have to employ, the rest are spent in a nearer Service to my Master.

And yet, *Sir*, I have so much Zeal for the Salvation of my Brethren, that I will bestow some moments to peruse your Book, and shew you (if you have, as you say, a desire, and will not let the prejudice of your Education hinder you from taking the means, to be saved) what reason the Council of *Trent* had to *Anathematize* all those who deny the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and how little you have brought against the uninterrupted Practice of the Church ever since the Apostles times. But this shall be the subject of another Letter, from,

Decemb. 5. 1687. SIR, *Your Friend and Servant.*

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